بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله وحده ، والصلاة والسلام على من لا نبي بعده ، سيدنا محمد ﷺ

وعلى آله وصحبه ومن اهتدى بهداه - أما بعد

I made this short treatise as a response to those who say that it is wrong to say that the word [إله] [**Ilāh**], when it is used in the Qur'ān, refers to **that which is worshipped**. According to them, taking an [إله] other than Allāh is not that you direct worship that is due to Allāh, to other than Him, rather it is equivalent to taking a creator, sustainer, etc., independent from Allāh.

So they say that the Mushrikīn of Makkah were not fought, only because they worshipped other than Allāh, rather they were fought because they saw Allāh as a "big God", but they took other than Him as "little gods", and they mean by that gods that they thought were able to create, sustain, benefit and harm like Allāh etc. - independent from Allāh. So according to them, not the worship of the Mushrikīn to other than Allāh was the problem, rather it was their taking **independent** "gods (here: creators, sustainers, etc.)" other than Allāh, for which they were fought.

According to those who have made it their goal and habit to worship other than Allāh, like asking help from the dead, or seeking refuge in them, or making Du'ā to other than Allāh, doing this is necessary, because if they take this definition of [إله], they can worship whatever they want, as long as they don't see that dead saint, for example, as a separate and independent "god" besides Allāh.

So they say: "We don't believe that they help independent of Allāh, rather they are our intercessors, as they are very close to Allāh compared to us, so we can worship them or supplicate to them, and this does not contradict the Shahādah, because we don't take them as **independent** "gods" besides Allāh."

I could end this response very quickly by citing our authorities in the Arabic language, i.e. the experts of the Arabic language and how they define [إله], but since the opposers of singling Allāh in worship have brought one Qur'ānic argument for their point, I will also respond to them with the Qur'ān. For those who have the integrity to accept the authority of our experts in the Arabic language in this particular matter - and they are content with worshipping Allāh alone - I will still mention few of the many references that could be used to make this argument:

1.) **Al-Rāghib al-Asfahānī [d. 502H] says in al-Mufradāt fī Gharīb al-Qurʾān:**

وإله جعلوه اسما لكل معبود لهم

And [they made] **Ilāh** a name for each deity of **WORSHIP** [Ma'būd] for them

2.) **Al-Zamakhsharī [d. 538H] says in Asās al-Balāgha**

أ ل ه

فلان يتأله: يتعبد

So and so is deifying: He is **WORSHIPPING**

3.) **In the dictionary of almaany.com in the [في معجم المعاني الجامع] it is written:**

أَلَهَ الرَّجُلُ : عَبَدَ

He deified the man: He **WORSHIPPED** [the man]

4.) **Ibn Manzūr [d. 711H, basing his works on dictionaries from 370H/ 458H/ 393H/ 582H and 630H] says in Lisān al-'Arab:**

أله: الإلَهُ: الله عز وجل، وكل ما اتخذ من دونه معبوداً إلَهٌ

Ilāh: al-Ilāh: Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic. And everything that has been taken in **WORSHIP** besides Him is [considered] an **Ilāh**.

So with these few references it becomes clear how it is correct to say that [إله] refers to **that which is worshipped**. So when we say

لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا ٱللَّه

it refers to **singling Allāh out in worship**, not directly singling Him out as Creator, Sustainer etc., although, as will be seen in the second part of the response, both have a connection.

Their argument:

So with regards to the Qur'ānic argument brought by those who have a problem with singling Allāh out in worship, is that they say, that Allāh says:

لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَآ ءَالِهَةٌ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا ۚ فَسُبْحَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

„Had there been within the heavens and earth „Āliha" [Plural of Ilāh] besides Allah , they both would have been ruined. So exalted is Allah , Lord of the Throne, above what they describe." [Surah al-Anbiya 21:22]

So they say: „If the meaning of Ilāh was the one who is worshipped and is not a creator, then this verse would make no sense, because for this verse to make sense, there would need to be competing powers. So the attribute of creating, sustaining etc. must be present within the word Ilāh for this verse to make sense. In conclusion, Ilāh means something that is worshipped as a creator, sustainer etc., besides Allāh. So the Mushrikīn of Quraysh were fought because they thought that there were "little gods" that had power independent from Allāh."

The response:

The response will answer this contention from two angles:

1.) **What Allāh says** that the Mushrikīn of Makkah believed.

2.) How to understand the verse cited above correctly.

1.) Allāh says about the Mushrikīn of Quraysh, that they themselves believed that the sole Creator, Sustainer, the One Who gives lives and takes it, the One Who controls **ALL** the affairs - all of this belongs to Allāh. And Allāh uses this belief of theirs **as an argument against them**.
Allāh says:

﴿قُل لِّمَنِ ٱلْأَرْضُ وَمَن فِيهَآ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾ سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ ۚ قُلْ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾ قُلْ مَن رَّبُّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ ٱلسَّبْعِ وَرَبُّ ٱلْعَرْشِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ ﴿٨٦﴾ سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ ۚ قُلْ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿٨٧﴾ قُلْ مَنۢ بِيَدِهِۦ مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ وَهُوَ يُجِيرُ وَلَا يُجَارُ عَلَيْهِ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾ سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ ۚ قُلْ فَأَنَّىٰ تُسْحَرُونَ﴾ [المؤمنون: 84-89]

Say, [O Muhammad ﷺ], "To whom belongs the earth and whoever is in it, if you should know?" **They will say, "To Allah." Say, "Then will you not remember?"** Say, "Who is Lord of the seven heavens and Lord of the Great Throne?" **They will say, "[They belong] to Allah." Say, "Then will you not fear Him?"** Say, "In whose hand is the realm of all things - and He protects while none can protect against Him - if you should know?" **They will say, "[All belongs] to Allah." Say, "Then how are you deluded?"** [Surah al-Mu'minūn 23:88-89]

So Allāh is using their belief to establish an argument against them: If you already believe that everything belongs to Allāh and none can protect against Him, why don't you act according to your belief and worship Him alone? Why do you worship those who have nothing in this regard and are themselves helpless? Their acknowledgement of His Oneness in Rububiyyah [i.e. Oneness in Lordship] is used by Allāh as a proof against them!

They know that none can protect against Allāh, that there is nothing, except that it belongs to Allāh, but they still worship other than Him. There are MANY other verses that show this belief of theirs:

﴿قُلۡ مَن يَرۡزُقُكُم مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ أَمَّن يَمۡلِكُ ٱلسَّمۡعَ وَٱلۡأَبۡصَٰرَ وَمَن يُخۡرِجُ ٱلۡحَيَّ مِنَ ٱلۡمَيِّتِ وَيُخۡرِجُ ٱلۡمَيِّتَ مِنَ ٱلۡحَيِّ وَمَن يُدَبِّرُ ٱلۡأَمۡرَۚ فَسَيَقُولُونَ ٱللَّهُۚ﴾ [يونس: 31]

Say, "Who provides for you from the heaven and the earth? Or who controls hearing and sight and who brings the living out of the dead and brings the dead out of the living **and who arranges [every] matter?" They will say, " Allah ," so say, "Then will you not fear Him?"** [Surah Yunus 10:31]

﴿وَلَئِن سَأَلۡتَهُم مَّنۡ خَلَقَهُمۡ لَيَقُولُنَّ ٱللَّهُۖ﴾ [الزخرف: 87]

„And if you asked them who created them, **they would surely say: Allah.“** [Surah az-Zukhruf 43:87]

First of all: these verses refute those who say that the Mushrikīn of Makkah believed in independent creators and sustainers besides Allāh, because Allāh gives us the answers to the questions He orders the Prophet ﷺ to pose to them, and <u>He does not say that they are lying, rather He uses their answers as argument against them</u>, i.e. that they fully believe that Allāh is to be **singled out in Lordship**, like creating, sustaining and in the controlling of the universe, but they still **worship** other than Him.

Naturally the question arises: Why do they do this?

Allāh informs us, after commanding us: “So worship Allah , [being] sincere to Him in religion.“ [39:2]

وَٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّخَذُواْ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ أَوۡلِيَآءَ مَا نَعۡبُدُهُمۡ إِلَّا لِيُقَرِّبُونَآ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ زُلۡفَىٰٓ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَحۡكُمُ بَيۡنَهُمۡ فِي مَا هُمۡ فِيهِ يَخۡتَلِفُونَۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَهۡدِي مَنۡ هُوَ كَٰذِبٞ كَفَّارٞ ٣

“Unquestionably, for Allah is the pure religion. And those who take Awliyah besides Him [say], "**We only worship them that they may bring us nearer to Allah in position**." [Sūrah az-Zumar 39:3]

So what is their goal in worshipping other than Allāh? To get independent benefit from them? Because they think that those whom they worship are creators and sustainers independent from Allāh?

No! **Their goal is to get closer to Allāh** thereby, because they know that **<u>in the end</u> Allāh is the One Who controls all the affairs**. They saw their forefathers worshipping other than Allāh to ultimately get benefit from Allāh thereby or to get closer to Him, so they blindly followed them in that.

In another verse the matter becomes even more clear:

وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنفَعُهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ شُفَعَٰٓؤُنَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِۚ قُلْ أَتُنَبِّـُٔونَ ٱللَّهَ بِمَا لَا يَعْلَمُ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَلَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِۚ سُبْحَٰنَهُۥ وَتَعَٰلَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

And they **worship other than Allah** that which **neither harms them nor benefits them**, and **they say**, "These are **our intercessors with Allāh**" [Surah Yunus 10:18]

So they worship that which they know does not harm or benefit them, but they **worship them as intercessors** with Allāh. **They know that Allāh controls all affairs**, but they direct forms of worship to other than Him, so that those whom they worship, **through Allāh**, fulfill their needs.

What does Allāh say at the end of the verse? That they are alright, as long as they don't think that those whom they worship besides Him **themselves** help them, and that as long as they think that the intercessors will help them **with the Will of Allāh**, everything is fine? No! Rather He says:

"Exalted is He and high above **what they associate with Him [**سُبْحَٰنَهُۥ وَتَعَٰلَىٰ **عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ]**."
[Surah Yunus 10:18]

They **associate with Him through giving worship**, which is the sole right of Allāh, **to other than Him**, as has also been explained by Imām at-Tabari [rahimahullāh] [cf. Tafsīr at-Tabari 12/143, Dar Ibn Hajr]**.**

So with the first answer it becomes clear how **taking an Ilāh [object of worship]** other than Allāh **does not mean** that you see that Ilāh as being a "little god" (god defined here as a creator, sustainer etc.) that **helps independent from Allāh**. Rather what becomes evident from the verses of the Qur'ān, is that the Quraysh worshipped what they worshipped **to get closer to Allāh**, and they used them **as intercessors** with Allāh, and that they never believed, that those whom they worshipped, i.e. took as Āliha with Allāh, benefit or harm independently from Allāh. **And Allāh has not allowed this for us**. Rather He has commanded us to be sincere in our religion and only direct worship to Him Alone.

2) How to understand the verse correctly.

Know that there is a difference between an Ilāh [object of worship] that **deserves worship** - Allāh -, and Āliha that do **not deserve worship**. And know that Allāh uses His Oneness in Rububiyyah to establish that He Alone is the One deserving worship. **So the One that is singled out in Rububiyyah, necessarily is the One who should be singled out in worship** - and **He is a true Ilāh**. Those who are worshipped as Āliha that have no share in Rububiyyah, are **false Āliha**.

In the verses quoted above - what does Allāh use as proof against the Mushrikīn of Makkah to establish that He alone deserves their worship? He uses their belief in His Oneness in Rububiyyah, i.e. in creating, sustaining, etc., as proof. And He uses this proof in other places in the Qur'ān as well. Allāh says:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ٱعْبُدُواْ رَبَّكُمُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكُمْ وَٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلْأَرْضَ فِرَشًا وَٱلسَّمَآءَ بِنَآءً وَأَنزَلَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَأَخْرَجَ بِهِۦ مِنَ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ رِزْقًا لَّكُمْۖ فَلَا تَجْعَلُواْ لِلَّهِ أَندَادًا وَأَنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾﴾ [البقرة: 21-22]

„O mankind, **worship your Lord**, **who created you** and **those before you**, that you may become righteous - [He] who **made for you the earth a bed** [spread out] and the **sky a ceiling** and **sent down from the sky, rain** and **brought forth thereby fruits** as provision for you. So do not attribute to Allah equals while you know [that there is nothing similar to Him]." [Surah al-Baqarah 2:21-22]

So here in these verses Allāh commands mankind to worship Him. What does Allāh use as proof against mankind, that necessitates them worshipping Him? He uses aspects that prove His Oneness in

Rububiyyah, like the creation of mankind, the creation of the earth and sky, the sending of rain, the growing of fruits etc. - all of this proves what? All of this proves that **He Alone deserves worship**, just as **He is Alone in all of these matters of Rububiyyah** - He is the **true Ilāh**.

The verses quoted before, that refute the Quraysh, are similar to this, and this verse makes the matter even clearer:

﴿ذَٰلِكُمُ ٱللَّهُ رَبُّكُمۡۖ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَۖ خَٰلِقُ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ فَٱعۡبُدُوهُۚ﴾ [الأنعام: 102]

That is Allah , your Lord; there is no Ilāh except Him, the Creator of all things, so worship Him. [Surah al-An'ām 6:102]

So one may ask: What is the reason to differentiate between a **true Ilāh**, i.e. an Ilāh that **deserves worship**, and a **false Ilāh**, i.e. an object of worship [Ilāh/Ma'būd] that **does not deserve the worship given to it**?

Understanding the difference between a false and a true Ilāh is the key to understanding the verses that have in them Ilāh. For example: in some places in the Qur'ān, Allāh **affirms the existence of Āliha** [objects of worship] other than Him, i.e. objects that are worshipped (although they do not deserve worship, i.e. false Āliha):

﴿وَلَا تَدۡعُ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَۘ﴾ [القصص: 88]

"And do not invoke with Allah another Ilāh." [Surah al-Qasas 28:88]

So Allāh orders here not to invoke an Ilāh other than Him. He affirms the existence of objects of worship [Āliha] besides Himself, but they are **false Āliha**, not true Āliha, i.e. **they do not deserve the worship that is being given to them**. That is why Allāh tells us not to invoke, i.e. not to worship those Āliha.

﴿أَئِفۡكًا ءَالِهَةٗ دُونَ ٱللَّهِ تُرِيدُونَ﴾ [الصافات: 86]

"Is it falsehood **Āliha other than Allah** you desire?" [Surah as-Sāffāt 37:86]

Here again, the existence of Āliha other than Allāh are affirmed, i.e. objects that are worshipped besides Allāh. But they are **false Āliha**.

In a different place Allāh says:

﴿لَقَدۡ أَرۡسَلۡنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوۡمِهِۦ فَقَالَ يَٰقَوۡمِ ٱعۡبُدُواْ ٱللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنۡ إِلَٰهٍ غَيۡرُهُۥٓ﴾ [الأعراف: 59]

We had certainly sent Noah to his people, and he said, "O my people, **worship Allah; you have no Ilāh other than Him.** Indeed, I fear for you the punishment of a tremendous Day. [Surah al-A'rāf 7:59]

So in this verse, as in the verse quoted above [6:102], Allāh says that **there is no Ilāh** other than Him. We see that in the verses before, the **existence of Āliha [objects of worship] other than Him were affirmed** and Allāh ordered that we should not worship them, and in this verse **the existence of Āliha other than Him are rejected**. What is the way to reconcile between the verses?

The way to reconcile this verse with the verses before, is that we say that the **meaning** of this verse - **you have no Ilāh other than Him -** is: There is no **true Ilāh other than Allāh**, and those who are worshipped **besides** Allāh **are falsely worshipped, i.e. they are false Āliha**.

﴿ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلۡحَقُّ وَأَنَّ مَا يَدۡعُونَ مِن دُونِهِۦ هُوَ ٱلۡبَٰطِلُ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلۡعَلِيُّ ٱلۡكَبِيرُ٦٢﴾ [الحج: 62]

„That is because Allah is the Truth, and that which they call upon other than Him is falsehood, and because Allah is the Most High, the Grand.“ [Surah al-Hajj 22:62]

So now the meaning of the verse in discussion becomes clear. Allāh says:

لَوۡ كَانَ فِيهِمَآ ءَالِهَةٌ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَاۚ فَسُبۡحَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلۡعَرۡشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ٢٢

„**Had there been** within the heavens and earth **„Āliha“ [Plural of Ilāh] besides Allāh** , they both would have been ruined. So exalted is Allah, Lord of the Throne, above what they describe.“ [Surah al-Anbiya 21:22]

Imām at-Tabarī [rahimahullāh] says in his Tafsīr regarding this verse:
“If there were in the Heavens and the Earth Āliha, **for which worship of them besides Allāh**, who is the Creator of everything, **would be correct** - and for no one except Him [Allāh] is worship and deification [Uluhiyyah] correct - “they both would have been ruined”, i.e. the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth would be ruined. “So exalted is Allah, Lord of the Throne, above what they describe. “ So Allāh absolved Himself and freed Himself from the lie that these Mushrikīn invented.” [16/246, Dar Ibn Hajr]

So we understand this verse as follows: Had there really been **true** Āliha besides Allāh - i.e. objects of worship **that actually have the power of creating, sustaining** etc., i.e. the **attributes that give them the rights to be worshipped** besides Allāh, making it correct that they are worshipped -, then the heavens and earth would have been ruined.

I repeat: Allāh says that **if** there were really objects of worship other than Allāh, **that actually deserved your worship**, i.e. Āliha that would be able to compete with Allāh in His actions of Rububiyyah, then the heavens and earth would be ruined. But contrary to this, the heavens and the earth are a stable existence, following constant laws, all parts being in harmony with each other, and Allāh points towards that in many verses. So this proves that **only He has the Attributes necessitating that He is worshipped** - i.e. the Attributes of Rububiyyah, and there is none who competes with Him in His Lordship. And because Oneness in Lordship necessitates Oneness in the right to be worshipped, Allāh Alone deserves every kind of worship. So their claim of having an **Ilāh that deserves their worship** besides Allāh, **was refuted** by Allāh through this, because if their claim was true, that Ilāh would **necessarily** have the attributes of Rububiyyah that would **give him the rights to be worshipped in the first place**, which would then lead to competing powers and the ruin of the heaven and the earth, as has been described in the verse.

From all of this follows, that **a true Ilāh, other than Allāh, does not exist**, rather everyone and everything worshipped besides Allāh are false Āliha, because the result that Allāh describes would follow from the existence of true Āliha other than Him, have not manifested, so none of those worshipped besides Him have a share in Rububiyyah, therefore none of those worshipped besides Him deserve the worship given to them.

This is also the reason why we say that the **comprehensive meaning** of the Shahādah

لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا ٱللَّه

[There is no Ilāh, except Allāh]

is: *La Ma’būd **biHaqqin** illAllāh*, i.e.:

There is no object of worship [Ilāh/Ma’būd] - **that truly deserves to be worshipped** - except Allāh.

And this is the end of the treatise.

والحمد لله رب العالمين